# The Repatriation of ISIS Children

**The UN estimates** 28,000 foreign children from 60 countries **are in Syrian Camps – 20,000 from Iraq**

## Age of Children in Camps

Under 18
20%

Under 5
50%

Under 12
30%

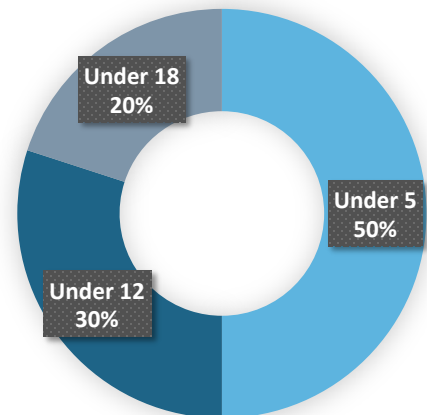**650 children have been repatriated to 17 countries...**

**Thousands more remain in dire conditions**

*In 2019, nearly 400 children were killed as a result of malnutrition, exposure & poor camp conditions.*

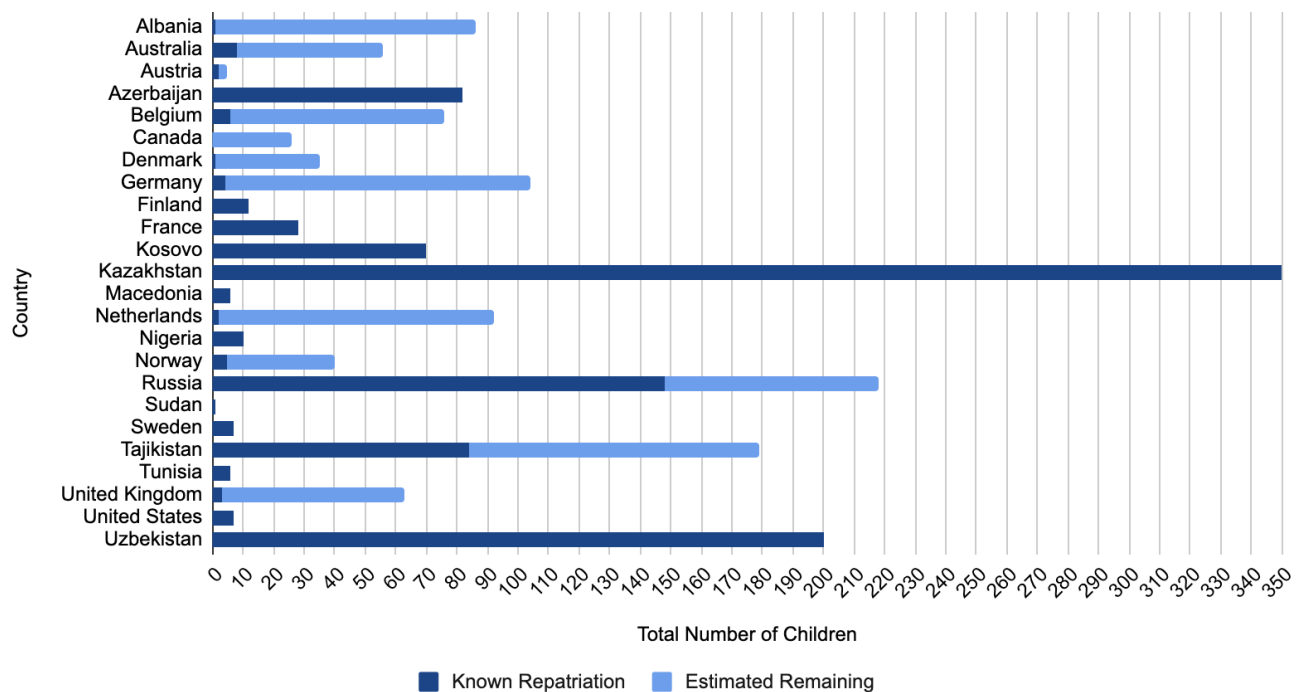*In July 2020, the UN recorded nearly* **700 deaths** *since December 2019*

**An unknown number of young boys are separately detained as suspected fighters**
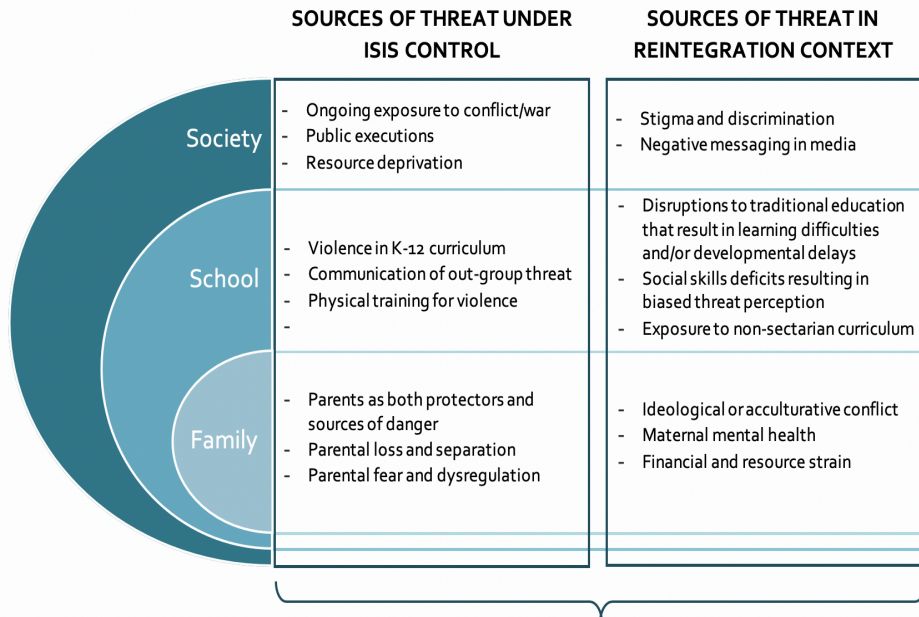
**66 new births** recorded in Al Hol in **July 2020**

## Number of Children Repatriated By Country

Country (vertical axis):
Albania, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Kosovo, Kazakhstan, Macedonia, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Russia, Sudan, Sweden, Tajikistan, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan

Total Number of Children (horizontal axis): 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100, 110, 120, 130, 140, 150, 160, 170, 180, 190, 200, 210, 220, 230, 240, 250, 260, 270, 280, 290, 300, 310, 320, 330, 340, 350

■ Known Repatriation    ■ Estimated Remaining

# Best Practices for Reintegration & Rehabilitation

**Trauma Systems Therapy provides a framework for:**

1) **Developing** a **multidisciplinary approach** to address interrelated needs, across multiple domains of development

2) **Reducing environmental stressors** and signals of threat

3) **Addressing a child's dysregulation** and distorted cognition related to the self, to others &the world around him/her.

## Society / School / Family

| | SOURCES OF THREAT UNDER ISIS CONTROL | SOURCES OF THREAT IN REINTEGRATION CONTEXT |
|---|---|---|
| **Society** | - Ongoing exposure to conflict/war<br>- Public executions<br>- Resource deprivation | - Stigma and discrimination<br>- Negative messaging in media |
| **School** | - Violence in K-12 curriculum<br>- Communication of out-group threat<br>- Physical training for violence<br>- | - Disruptions to traditional education that result in learning difficulties and/or developmental delays<br>- Social skills deficits resulting in biased threat perception<br>- Exposure to non-sectarian curriculum |
| **Family** | - Parents as both protectors and sources of danger<br>- Parental loss and separation<br>- Parental fear and dysregulation | - Ideological or acculturative conflict<br>- Maternal mental health<br>- Financial and resource strain |

**SURVIVAL RESPONSES DRIVEN BY PHYSIOLOGICAL, EMOTIONAL, AND COGNITIVE DYSREGULATION**

**Mobilizing** (submissive or overbright behavior)

**Dominant** (anger, hostility, aggression)

**Demobilizing** (freezing, numbing/masking, submission, lethargy)

## A 3 Phase Approach

**Phase 1**
- Identify and mitigate actual risk to child from either social environment or dangerous behavior (e.g., self-injury or aggression)

**Phase 2**
- Identify patterns of threat signals and survival states; reduce incidences of perceived threat while building emotion regulation skills; begin to increase cognitive flexibility

**Phase 3**
- Re-assess needs across a variety of domains; process traumatic and/or confusing events; broaden rigid ideological perspectives; increase self-efficacy; plan for the future



A child stands in queue in al-Hol camp, housing relatives of ISIS members, northeastern Syria (Photo: Giuseppe Cacace via Getty)

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